

Top Secret



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

State Department review completed

DIA REVIEW COMPLETED

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114

27 July 1967

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Information as of 1600
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HIGHLIGHTS

On 26 July the Communists attacked a US base camp and a village north of Saigon with mortars and rockets and continued to shell US strong points just south of the DMZ.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
Enemy forces attacked the airstrip and base camp of the US 1st Infantry Division's 1st Brigade at Phuoc Vinh 35 miles north of Saigon with 137 rounds of mortar and rocket fire on 26 July. Sporadic enemy shelling also continued just below the Demilitarized Zone on 26-27 July (Paras. 1-5).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
The central election campaign committee, a newly formed organization composed of two representatives from each of the 11 presidential tickets, has outlined the ground rules for next month's official campaign (Para. 1).

25X

IV. Other Communist Military Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: Japanese mission in Moscow talks to a North Vietnamese Foreign Trade official (Paras. 1-2).

VI. Other Major Aspects: Cambodia invites ICC to investigate reports of North Vietnamese rocket sites on Cambodian territory (Paras. 1-2).

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Enemy forces attacked the airstrip and base camp of the US 1st Infantry Division's 1st Brigade at Phuoc Vinh, 35 miles north of Saigon, with 137 rounds of 82-mm. mortar and 122-mm. rocket fire on 26 July. Eleven US soldiers were killed and 63 wounded in the barrage.

2. At the same time, the Communists unleashed a 100-round mortar barrage on the village of Tan Uyen some 15 miles to the south which killed three South Vietnamese civilians and wounded 15. Sporadic enemy shelling also continued just south of the Demilitarized Zone on 26-27 July despite the recent heavy B-52 strikes within and north of the zone.

3. A US strong point at Gio Linh was hit by 60 rounds of mortar and artillery fire during one six-hour period. Con Thien and Dong Ha were hit by mortar fire, and the US Marine amphibious base at Cau Viet reportedly was hit by long-range, Soviet-made 140-mm. rockets. US casualties at these fortified positions below the DMZ were light.

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27 July 1967

I-1

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The newly formed central election campaign committee, which consists of two representatives from each of the 11 presidential tickets, has outlined the major aspects of the campaign that starts next week. In accordance with the electoral regulations, the candidates are scheduled to make 24 joint appearances, mostly in the provinces, in the month before the election. They will appear on television three times, speak on the radio once, and hold two joint press conferences. Candidates are not allowed to use public buildings or government offices for additional speeches, but they may hold forth in their own homes or in restaurants. According to the US Embassy, the campaign committee's schedule is not mandatory; there has been no elaboration thus far on what the candidates will be allowed to do on their own.

27 July 1967

II-1

25X1

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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILTIARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

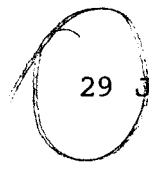
27 July 1967

IV-1

V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Tokyo has been making a concerted effort to open a channel for communications with Hanoi during Foreign Minister Miki's visit to Moscow and East European capitals. While in Moscow, Miki's group succeeded only in talking to a North Vietnamese trade official, according to the US Embassy in Tokyo. On 22 July, one of the Foreign Ministry officials accompanying Miki talked with Nghiem Ba Duc, North Vietnam's vice minister of Foreign Trade, in a Moscow hotel room. The two men reportedly agreed on the desirability of establishing "noncommittal personal relations with a view to the longer range future." The Japanese official indicated that the Japanese ambassador in Moscow would like to "maintain contact" with his Vietnamese counterpart. Duc reportedly promised to pass this offer on to his ambassador.

2. Nghiem Ba Duc for some time has been promoting trade contacts with Japan. He reportedly discussed trade relations with a Japanese businessman in early July, and he was probably happy to have an opportunity to try to persuade an official of the Japanese Government that Tokyo ought to reduce restrictions on trade with Vietnam. Although the Miki mission is anxious to act as a peacemaker in Vietnam, the Moscow contact suggests that Hanoi wants to use the contacts only to explore trade relations--both current and long range.

29 July 1967

V-1

VI. OTHER MAJOR ASPECTS

1. Cambodia has formally requested the International Control Commission (ICC) to investigate reports that North Vietnamese "rocket sites" are located on its territory. The request follows denial earlier this week of a US newspaper story that such "sites" are located in Cambodia opposite Pleiku Province in South Vietnam.

2. Phnom Penh has made considerable use of ICC investigations in recent years to substantiate its assertions that Cambodia has been the victim of "aggression" from US and South Vietnamese forces. This is the first time, however, that the ICC has been asked to investigate a specific charge of North Vietnamese activity in Cambodia, and probably reflects Phnom Penh's confidence that such an investigation will substantiate its claims that there are no North Vietnamese or Viet Cong elements on its territory. Cambodia's ability to stage a profitable "investigation" may prove more difficult this time, however,

25X

27 July 1967

VI-1